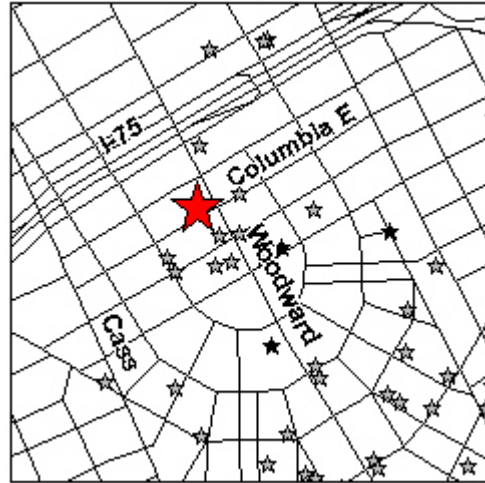


Fox Theatre Building

2111 Woodward Avenue

Local		
State	✓	10/17/91
State Marker		
National	✓	6/29/89
National Landmark	✓	6/29/89



Fox Theatre

Photograph by Robert Eovaldi, courtesy of the National Park Service

Historic overview:

Architect C. Howard Crane, internationally known theatre architect, created the awe-inspiring Fox Theatre Building at a cost \$12 million in 1928. Seating over 5,000 people, the Fox outdistanced all other movie palaces in the city by the magnitude of its proportions. The vast auditorium, unobstructed by columns, was a marvel of engineering, and the interior décor was magnificent. It had the largest clear span balcony in the world, with a grand stage and greatest projection and equipment room of any of the world's theatres. While eclectic in decoration, the Fox was well equipped with every modern convenience including: an emergency hospital, a summer refrigeration capacity of 600 tons, a central vacuum cleaner system, and power transformers large enough to operate all the street cars in Detroit.

The auditorium boasts a giant four manual, thirty-six rank Wurlitzer pipe organ, one of only five such instruments, constructed especially for the largest Fox theatres in the country. The organ requires seven chambers to house some 2,700 pipes, percussions and effects; one room for the relays and another room housing two 50 horsepower Spencer blowers. As the building rose around it, the organ took more than four months to install.

In the 1930-1960s the Fox sponsored a variety of well known entertainers such as Benny Goodman, Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, The Temptations, The Supremes, and Little Stevie Wonder. As television replaced motion pictures, many movie



houses fell into disuse. The ten-story Fox Theatre Building has been restored to its former glory.

